Thunder Stick

The Journal of Vancouver M.E.N.



Contents Letters to the Editor 4, 5, 23, 26 How Men Touch Men Guy Corneau Interview From Gender War to Gender Peace 10 The Freedman Stoltenberg Syndrome 12 Single Jingle - O! Joy of Active Fatherhood 15 Book Review: Fire With Fire 18 He Spent His Last Six Months in a M.E.N.'S Group 24 Events Calendar 30 31 Happenings **Cover Illustration:** By Bettina Sluzki Lewis

Thunder Stick:

a slat of wood tied to the end of a thong, usually made of leather, which makes an intermittent roaring sound when whirled about. It is used by indigenous native people throughout the world to call the community together for ceremonial events and often for male initiation rites.

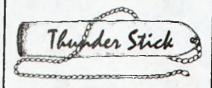
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Please direct mail to: 3392 West 34th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V6N 2K6

The views expressed in the letters, articles and advertising of are not necessarily those of *Thurder Stick* or **Vancouver M.E.N.** We hope that this journal will stimulate thought, provoke discussion and further the development of a positive male mode of being.

Deadline for submissions for the next issue of Thunder Stick is June 15th, 1994. Closing date for Ads is June 30th, 1994.

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A time for leaving

This is the 12th issue of **Thinder** Stick! We have been publishing for three years. This is my last edition as editor. It is an uncomfortable feeling this letting go, this saying good bye. I am complete. It is time for me to be moving on.

Before I go I'll indulge in a little reflection, and share with you my thoughts about the first 12 issues of Thurder Stick.

Looking back to our first issue we said we wanted to be; a forum through which new information and ideas pertaining to men's inner soul work can be presented to the men of this area, and that we would publish materials emphasizing the mythopoetic approach to men's work. It was a modest beginning with a narrowly defined goal.

That first year saw us publishing such articles as The Distinction Between Soul and Spirit, Juicy Strength: Lessons About the Moist Male, Conflict and Intimacy Among Men, Into the Black with Meade and Bly, Wounded Father and At a Men's Dance. Our focus was not just 'soul work'. We published the first edition of the Directory of Services for Men.

In our second year the focus began to expand and we published articles such as Daddy, I don't want to go to mommy's house, A Letter From Jail, It was just a joke! - I was terrified! and Working within a High School. It was now clear that the goals and

interest of our readers were expanding and we were seeing a more diverse 'men's movement'. This past year has clearly demonstrated that men are still interested in soul work but as we said; It is an old debate this conflict between meeting spiritual needs and addressing the pressing needs in the community. There is always a tension here but as the men's movement matures there are signs that we are moving to a more balanced place. Our task is to deal with the social problems in our communities while continuing to do our personal work. There is no substitute for doing personal work and there is no future unless we address the needs of the community.

In this our third year the most difficult task has been to find the space to deal with our diversity/ complexity including soul work, psychological material, social issues, and political action. It's all about us trying to define the men's movement, determine where it is and where it is going. The past four issues have offered a wide selection of articles including: men's theatre festival, men and suicide, male violence, death, prison life, initiation, and circumcision.

Here we are in our present issue talking about gender relations via an article and two interviews as well as death, homosexuality, and a range of definitions of masculinity.

Two of my personal goals are

realized in this issue; letters to the editor on more than one topic, and a concrete response to my last editorial which hopefully begins the dialogue between gay and straight men here in Thurder Stick. Thank you Sequoia Lundy.

If you are still with me in this personal editorial I know you realize that there is an opportunity for you in this journal. Vancouver MEN needs men to continue Thurse Stick. Let me just ignite your vision - Thurse Stick needs an editor and only you know if you are that editor. I didn't know I was the first editor until I found myself doing it. Make a difference. Have a say! Give us a call at 290-9988.

As for me this has been the most challenging, provocative and joyous voluntary project I have ever experienced. The decision to leave now just as things are taking off has been difficult. My finger prints are all over Thurder Stick. It is time for new blood and fresh ideas.

It is impossible to name all of those men and women who have contributed to the success of Thurse Stick over the past three years. Thank you to all of you. I wish the new editors the best of luck as Thurse Stick continues to evolve and change as it meets the challenges of today and tomorrow.

David Hanley



Dear Thunder Stick Readers,

It is with sadness that I note that David Hanley is stepping down as editor of I Stick. For three years he has given generously of himself, to make your magazine a solid, interesting, highly readable and alive publication which reflects well on the vibrant Vancouver men's community. Under his leadership I stick has emerged as the voice of men's work in Western Canada - and a strong voice it is!

I have had the pleasure of meeting David at the last two Wingspan Men's Leaders' Conferences, and I respect David as a wise elder. One with a puckish sense of humour and a passion for making a difference in the world. He has. At the last Wingspan conference, as the group was excitedly talking about beginning to take men's work into prisons, David quietly informed us that he and the men of Vancouver have been doing this for quite a while. He doesn't have the national notoriety of the men I've interviewed about prison work for M.E.N. Magazine, but he gets the job done.

I am glad that David will continue to be a strong wiseelder force in the Vancouver men's community, and will be continuing his work in prison. (On a visiting non-resident basis, I hope!) I am confident that other men in Vancouver will volunteer their time and creative energy to keep up the important work of Thurses Stick.

> Bert H. Hoff, Editor M.E.N. Magazine Seattle

Ritual Group vs Process Group

Dear Editor,

I appreciated seeing in the last issue of **Thurder Stick**Evan Brett's article "Ritual Group VS. Process Group".
He seems to be saying that Ritual and Process work are not compatible. I respect Evan's opinion and now here's mine.

I believe Ritual and Process work are compatible. As a man, my life is my process and I have several significant "process groups" such as my family, friends, co-workers, men's support group, and perhaps even a therapist-run group. Like Evan's, my process also involves working on my past, my fears, men's issues, sex, addictions, belief system and "all of those things that most of us are now familiar with - often just called sharing". Every hour of every day of my life, this male being inches along it's unfolding path.

So how do I know where I am now, where I've been, or where I'm going next? How do I mark my progress? How do I remind myself that this journey is sacred and magical, not always clinical or task-oriented? How do I get myself unstuck when it's time to propel myself past the next fork in the road? Ritual.

Cory Bretz

Dear Editor,

I have just moved back to Vancouver after 15 years on the road so to speak. Ten of those years were spent in Montreal, where I became involved with the men's movement about five years ago via a workshop given by

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Guy Corneau. Reading the Winter issue of **Thinder Stick** has been an inspiration to me, since the English men's groups in Montreal are few and not as well connected as they seem to be here.

I've just read the article about the differences between the process group vs the ritual group and would like to add a few things from my own experience.

The men's group I was in began over four years ago and started as a pseudo-ritualistic group with drumming - making masks - dancing, etc., as well as discussing our life problems. We went through various members, who usually quit because there was this tension between the two approaches, or so it seems. After a few years we became a core group of five, and moved away from the ritual approach to a more process oriented one. (This was made clear to me when our group was asked to take part in the TV show *The Best Years*, with Guy Corneau, which showed our group sitting in a circle discussing our problems or why we were in a group, and a Vancouver group in the woods dancing.)

We met at a bar-restaurant every three weeks, and discussed our major life problems. We usually had no set agenda or focus, which many of us preferred, other that talking about things which were sick of only discussing with the women in our lives.

I tend to agree on some points made in the article about the ritualistic approach possibly filling a spiritual void which is true, there is one. What has concerned many, (Carl Jung and James Hillman, to mention a few), with this modern tendency, is that by embracing these other spiritual practices, we tend to deny or betray our own psychological - spiritual or cultural past, and become ahistorical. I think a balance of the two is necessary, and can be combined as long as one's won boundaries and needs are clear.

This going over one's problems again and again may seem tedious to the ritualist, but what is actually happening is soul-work. To reduce these two approaches we can say one is of the spirit (ritualistic), and one is of the soul (process). These so-called petty problems and symptoms, that keep getting in one's way, those day to day disturbances, keeps one on the ground, rooted in soul - as James Hillman reminds us from time to time. If true inner psychic change is to occur, it is a slow laborious process, going over ones life again and again, but from different angles and perspectives. A weekend in the woods may begin the process of realisation and be an amazing discovery of ones own inner being, but the work itself may take more than that.

Both approaches though can get stuck in their own ideologies because what I've found is that the more process oriented person actually has difficulty in letting go or being out of control, in the Dionysian sense, which may be what is needed, while the extreme ritualist may need to set a few roots into the reality of his earthly existence. Of course these are generalisations and these differences are not as clear cut as I have laid out here. The challenge for men's groups, individual men, myself included, is to take the middle ground, by not identifying too strongly with either approach.

Paul Bergman

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How Men Touch Men

by Sequoia Thom Lundy

"My father never hugged me, (or I guess he stopped when I was about twelve). He said I was getting too old. When I cried, he hit me and said 'Don't you ever cry again!' (I never have.) I hug my children regularly. But I have a lot of fear about hugging other men. I'd really like to, but I can't. Maybe in 20 years. . . "

"When I was 20 years old, riding with my dad in his truck, he put his arm across the backrest and put one finger on my shoulder. It was like a lightening bolt! He had never, ever touched me before. It felt so good, so powerful! I had never missed his touch, but now I knew what I had been missing."

"I've studied massage. I've always liked to touch, to hug... men or women. I've even kissed men. There's something about kissing a man on the cheek - it's not feminine..."

"Yeah - the best French kiss I ever had was with a man!"

"Wow - the first time I saw the Russian Olympic athletes kissing on the lips, I freaked out! Then I realized I had never touched a man except to compete. I envied the Russian men. Now I can at least hug a man, (although I'm still not ready to kiss...)"

"When I hug someone, a woman or a man, I often get an erection. It's confusing because I'm not hugging with sex in mind."

"The men in my men's group hug pretty easily. Last week, we decided to go out for a meal. Afterwards, I felt real awkward hugging them in public."

These quotes paraphrase the sharing of 10 men at a discussion of "Men and Touch" at the Seattle Men's Wisdom Council. It illustrates some of the issues men feel about this emotionally charged topic.

Thai men hold hands walking together. Russian men kiss. In many cultures, it's totally okay for men to openly show affection for each other. Here, men seem to be permitted only to: shake hands, knock each other around competitively, and kill other men in war. We are not permitted to hold hands, hug (except very briefly),

kiss or otherwise show any tender, caring feelings for each other.

Ours is one of the most violent cultures in the world. Is there any connection between our fear of man-to-man affection and our violence?

As men we are beginning to re-examine who we are, how we behave, how we each relate with our self, with women, with children, and with each other. A significant, unexamined area about our interactions is how we touch one another. Are we happy with our current behaviour? Do we wish to explore new options?

Touch is an essential form of communication. It is the primal language, the one we understood before we knew words. The way we give and receive touch communicates from a very deep, and sometimes unconscious, part of ourselves to the same deep place in the other person. Our "adult" selves learned to communicate with words and concepts. But the "child" in us is fluent in the language of touch. Our emotional well-being is very much influenced by the quality of touch in our lives. What happens when we are out of touch with our need and capacity for touch?

In psychology, the "shadow" is understood to be that part of our own personality which contains the traits we do not wish to acknowledge or "own." These could be qualities like greed, jealousy, hatred, fear, or even vulnerability, tenderness, and ability to nurture. The disowned parts are then "projected" onto other people, for whom we feel inordinate attraction or repulsion.

This frequently occurs in sorting out so-called genderappropriate qualities, where we own certain qualities and project others onto the opposite sex. The traditional gender expectations attribute cooperativeness and emotional softness to women, and competition and physical/intellectual prowess to men.

Moreover, these so-called feminine qualities are generally devalued in our culture. Those who exhibit them, women and "queer" men, are treated with less respect, and are frequently the objects of derision and aggression by "manly" men.

Thus, many men disown our tenderness, our inner child, and project it onto the women in our lives. It is seen as okay for women to be vulnerable, while men maintain the appearance of strength and independence. A "real" man needs only enough physical closeness to unload his manly sexual tension. Some women are beginning to complain about being the sole source of nurturing for men. They are beginning to ask why men don't do more nurturing of each other.

The problem with the shadow is that it puts us out of balance, as we devalue certain qualities in ourselves and exaggerate their opposite. One example is the person who disowns their assertiveness and becomes excessively compliant and "nice." If, as a whole culture, men disown tender, nurturing co-operative qualities, what can we show toward one another? We can only compete: in business, on the playing-field, and on the battle-field.

Quest Counselling Services Events Calendar

Friday, April 15th, BEYOND THE TWELVE STEPS: An ongoing process group for men and women, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm. Registration is ongoing.

Saturday, April 16th, TRANSFORMATIONAL MOVEMENT WORKSHOP for men and women, 10 am - 2 pm.

Sunday, April 17th, SINGLES UNITE: A process group for single men and women - 30 and under, 7 pm - 9 pm.

Saturday, April 24th, A GATHERING OF MEN: An experiential workshop, 10 am - 2 pm.

Saturday, April 30th, TRANSFORMATIONAL MOVEMENT WORKSHOP for men and women, 10 am - 2 pm.

Sunday, May 1st, MAN ALIVE: An analysis of contemporary issues like the Lorena & John Bobbit case. 7 pm - 9 pm.

Tuesday, May 3rd, THE QUEST FOR MEANING: An empowerment group for men. 7 pm - 9 pm

Saturday, May 29th, A GATHERING OF MEN: An experiential workshop, 10 am - 2 pm.

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for registation and additional information

As a child I was very aware of the discrepancy between the quality of contact I experienced with females and males. The women and girls in my life were very open, available emotionally, and affectionately expressive. They showed their caring through words and touch.

The males were another story. My father was emotionally distant and authoritarian. I met him for the first time when I was one-and-a-half years old when he returned from the war in Europe. (I can now appreciate that he may not have been feeling at his most loving after several years of warfare.) We disliked each other immediately, and competed throughout my childhood for my mother's affection. We were not close! The boys in my neighbourhood were a rough bunch. Early on they picked up on my gentle nature and labelled me a "fag" and a "sissy." They belittled the most wonderful part of me: my playful, tender, affectionate self.

▶ page 20

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Guy Corneau is a Jungian psychoanalyst with a private practice in Montreal. His work focuses on healing the hearts and minds of men and women.

His last workshop in Vancouver was on his first book, Absent
Fathers/Lost Sons. He is now working on his second book, the working title is The War of Love, which details the dynamics of the mother and son relationship and how these dynamics influence and effect future adult relationships.
Guy will be in Vancouver for a lecture and two workshops from June 17 - 19. 1994.

Guy was interviewed for Thurder Stick by John Brozak.

Q I have heard that you're working on a new book now. What are you covering in that one?

A It's a very large project, unfortunately for me. I think my bite was a bit large. It's called *The War of Love* and it's really about the battle we have throughout our lives in order to become a human being. It's really the battle to become a human being.

I'm starting from the point that at one point in your life, sooner or later, you basically wake up and say what am I all about?, what am I looking for?, what is freedom, love or whatever? You start cleaning up your own act and seeing where you are coming from. It's about disentangling oneself from family business

An Interview with Guy Corneau

and keeping what's good and moving on from what's bad. It's really a work on differentiation of one's own identity, of recognizing and differentiating oneself.

So, one part of the book deals with fathers and daughters, and another with mothers and sons, and then it deals with our need for community. There's a whole section of the book devoted to violence, the father and rules. I think we went too fast in a way. I think we became very individualistic and threw away our sense of society and community.

Q That's great to hear. More and more people are becoming aware of the societal and social needs around this individuation work that we do. A lot of people who have worked wonderfully on themselves, to the exclusion of society, wonder why we have gangs and all the other situations that are going on.

I wonder if Jung and some of the others were a bit naive when they said that if you work on yourself everything else will take care of itself. I think we need to have some turning back to society.

A I'm trying to say that the real foundation of the identity of an individual is like a chair. It needs four legs. One leg is biological.

There is a psychological leg. There is one for the community and there is a spiritual leg. Unless you have that it just does not hold together. It does not stand, you know. If you want to have a solid foundation you must respect all these aspects of the individual. That's how you create a human being.

The book is really a way through all that. Then on to couples, where patterns that were not cleared up in the family of origin start to repeat themselves. Then it comes to the intimacy with oneself, the conquest of oneself - submitting the ego or sense of oneself to a deeper sense of Self.

The book is opening towards spirituality and the battle with God. In this battle with God we need to be fused with spirituality, but we also need the sense of Self. It's really trying to draw the difference between being too fused with an experience and too separate from that experience, to find the middle road. I think that's the human place. It's not easy to find the communion. I'm talking about the communion in relations, instead of fusion and separation.

Q You've mentioned that you want to call the lecture Healing the Heart, The Meaning of Illness. Can you give me a bit of your background thinking



on that idea?

A We can actually even call it *The Meaning of Crisis*. My starting point is the betrayal of the heart and the betrayal of the body that we do in our society while pursuing our ideals and goals. Suddenly, people find themselves ill, they don't have any more energy to go on, the hero is down. All kinds of things happen to you.

I'm saying that we should listen to the illness for a while, instead of healing it - first get in contact with what it is trying to say. I think illness is really about the big division between the masculine and feminine within and outside of ourselves, between instinct and spirituality. I think we live in a civilization which is very wounded at this level.

The figure I use to talk about all that, is the meeting of Parsifal. I use the encounter with the Fisher King.

Q A few of us are getting together to have a Parsifal dinner, to do a reading and discussion of how it applies to our lives.

A I talk about the meeting with the king, who is ill, inside of ourselves, on the psychological level. It's really to do with the power of life. This man who is totally desolate on the outside level is going on with his

quest. He enters a very symbolic land where the king is ill and I think he's really entered his own psychological place. So, the lecture is concerned with all that and trying to show that accidents and depressions and physical and psychic wounds are really means of initiation and encounter with oneself.

I also use another aspect of the legend. Do you know the book *The Myths of Avalon?*

Friday Night Public Lecture:

Healing the Heart;

The Meaning of Illness

Saturday Workshop
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Sunday Afternnon Workshop: Father's Day Special; Father's and their sons and/or daughters

Q Yes, by Marian Zimmer Bradley.

A Yes, I show that at the time of King Arthur, the same time that Avalon appears in the myths, symbolizes how the feminine and all the mystery around the body, love and sexuality disappeared from our consciousness and how that era was a victory of the patriarchy and the masculine.

In fact, the rest is in the unconscious and it's overlapping the theme of the king being ill. In a certain version of the legend the king has been wounded by a sorceress. Well, the sorceresses at that time were really the priestesses who had been condemned by the church. So, it's interesting to see this big wound all through our religious civilizations.

I'm also bringing this to my own experience of illness. There is a testimony about what I went through being ill and the sense of the division in oneself being healed, a sense of unity appearing and the freedom and lightness and pleasure of existing. I'm going to draw all these things together to show that our physical illnesses and crises are really the words of the betrayed heart and we must listen to that in order to heal the heart. What we're looking for is the healing of the heart. Whether we are able to entertain physical health or not, the real healing is in the heart. So, that's what the lecture is about.

Q The Saturday workshop is called Intimacy With Oneself. Could you elaborate about that?

A One of the tools I use, is having participants bring along photographs of significant people in their lives. This enables people to introvert a lot and then go and share in small groups and finally move to deeper work.

In this workshop I ask people to draw the line of intimacy in their lives. How did it go? What were the times where they were intimate with somebody or with themselves? What were the difficulties, be it with parents or lovers or even children?

Then I ask a series of questions around each of these meaningful

▶ page 22

From Gender War to Gender Peace: The Quest for Love and Justice between Women and Men

by Elizabeth Herron M.A. and Aaron R. Kipnis Ph.D

Have you noticed that the war between the sexes seems to be getting worse? Polarized superpowers have buried the hatchet, but the war between American women and men continues unabated. On every television talk show, women and men are increasingly bitter in their accusations toward one another. We feel the tension in the universities, in our homes and in our workplaces.

The social contracts between women and men are rapidly changing. Often, however, these changes are being enacted on behalf of one sex or the other. Thus, there is a growing mistrust between the sexes in many sectors of our culture. Most men and women seem unable to tolerate the paradoxical idea that they can have differing, but equally valid, perspectives on many issues.

In an attempt to address some of the discord between the sexes, we have been conducting gender councils around the country. We invite groups of men and women to spend some time apart to talk about their issues with the opposite sex. Then we bring them into an encounter with one another.

Men have an ancient history of enmity toward women. For centuries, many believed women to be the cause of our legendary fall from God's grace. "How can he be clean that is born of a woman" asks the Bible. Martin Luther proposed that "God created Adam Lord of all living things, but Eve spoiled it all". The "enlightened" sixties brought us Abbie Hoffman who said, "The only alliance I would make with the Women's Liberation Movement is in bed." And from the religious right, Jerry Falwell still characterizes feminism as a "satanic attack" on the American family.

The women's movement as well, both historically and currently, significantly devalues men. Marilyn French, author of the *Women's Room* said, "All men are rapists and that's all they are." In *Pure Lust*, Mary Daly characterizes male sexuality as "ontologically evil". In response to the emerging men's movement, Betty Friedan says, "Oh God, sick ... I'd hoped by now men were strong enough to accept their vulnerability and to be authentic without aping Neanderthal cavemen."

Susan Faludi denounces the "undeclared war against women," yet in the same breath initiates a feminist "backlash" of her own against the men's movement.

Instead of creating astute gender diplomats and mediators, the women's and men's movements seem to be breeding increasingly aggressive gender warriors. Many women and men now express their growing empowerment by firing bigger and more articulate missiles across the gender gap, at one another. There's a dearth of compassion, on both sides, for the predicaments of the other sex.

- Men say women are too emotional; women say men don't feel enough.
- Men fear women's power to wound them emotionally; women fear men's power to wound them physically.
- Women feel sexually harassed; men feel their courting behaviour is often misunderstood.
- Women feel men don't do their fair share of housework and child care; men feel that women don't do an equal share of providing income and home maintenance.
- Many women feel morally superior to men; many men feel that they are more logical and just.
- Women say men have destroyed the environment; men say the women's movement has destroyed the family.
- Men are often afraid to speak about their own victimization; women frequently deny their real power.
- Women feel that men don't listen, men feel women talk too much.
- Women are concerned about lesser pay; men are concerned about job safety and shorter life spans.
- Women are concerned about men's sexual abuse; men are concerned about women's physical violence and neglect toward children.
- Women are concerned about unfairness in child support payments; men are concerned about unfairness in custody and visitation rights.

It is very difficult to listen to these conflicting perspectives and consider each one of them to have intrinsic value. Many of us fear that if we listen to the story of another, it will diminish our capacity to have our own voice. The fear of losing our own initiative and identity is one of the factors that prevents us from hearing the other. It keeps us locked in polarized thinking and

Some of our gender conflict is an inevitable by-product of the positive growth that has occurred in our society in the last generation. The traditional gender roles of previous generations imprisoned many men and women in soul-killing routines. Women felt dependent and disenfranchised from power, men were divorced from feelings, family and their capacity for self-care.

With almost 70% of women now in the work force, "traditionalist" calls from Barbara Bush and Marilyn Quayle for women to return to the home full-time seem ludicrous. And increasing numbers of men now want to downshift from full-time work in order to spend more time at home. We can't go back to the old heroic model of masculinity and domestic ideal of femininity. How then do we re-weave a new social fabric out of the broken strands of worn out sexual stereotypes?

Numerous participants in the women's and men's movements have been discovering that the developmental needs of each sex require the strength, healing and security that comes from affiliation with a bonded, same-sex culture group. Women and men have different social, psychological, and biological realities. Boys and girls receive very different behavioral training, from infancy through adulthood. Genetically, we also have several million years of uncommon evolution as female gatherers and male hunters. In most pre-technological societies, both women and men regularly participated in same-sex social and ceremonial groups. This process of gender affiliation usually began with some form of ritual initiation. At the onset of puberty, young men and women were introduced to the men's and women's lodge. In these lodges, they experienced a deep form of

▶ page 28

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* what mothers are feeling as they raise sons

* what sons are feeling during boyhood and adolescence

* what grown men feel in their love-relationships as a consequence of unresolved mother-son issues * what lovers and wives experience as their lovers and husbands live out unconscious mother-son patterns



MICHAEL GURIAN

is a teacher, counsellor, writer and storyteller, has taught psychology, religion and mythology. He's the author of two acclaimed books: The Prince and the King: Healing the Father-Son Wound and Mothers, Sons and

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The Freedman-Stoltenberg Syndrome

by Ferrel Christensen

Reprinted from the MERGE Journal reprint series Vol 4 #4, (M.E.R.G.E. - Movement for the Establishment of Real Gender Equality)

Most readers of the MERGE newsletter will not recognize the names of Max Freedman and John Stoltenberg. Any who do, however, are apt to be seriously puzzled by the title of this article. "What could those two possible have in common? They're at opposite extremes in their views - the one is a strong traditionalist on gender equality issues and the other is a radical feminist!" But the core emotional experience that motivates their activism is the same. Where these two differ profoundly is in their reactions to that experience.

To explain, let us look briefly at the views of each of these men. Freedman argues vociferously for a return to traditional gender roles in a book graphically titled Manhood Redux. At one point, focusing on the childhood years where one first grapples with one's sense of masculinity or femininity, he decries the legal efforts to allow athletic little girls to play on boy's sports teams. Now, one might object to those efforts on various grounds, such as freedom of association. But Freedman's central concern is the emotional effect on young boys of having to compete with girls. A girl denied the opportunity to participate in a boys' sport will recover from the disappointment, he says; but a less athletic boy who finds himself bested by a girl may be seriously emotionally scarred, he says, and his concept of himself as a male could be permanently impaired.

For example of Stoltenberg's ideas about being male, let me simply quote his own words:

The male sex is socially constructed. It is a political entity that flourishes only through acts of force and sexual terrorism. Apart from the global inferiorization and subordination of those who are defined as "nonmale", the idea of personal membership in the male sex class would have no recognisable meaning. It would make no sense. No one could be a member of it and no one would think they should be a member of it. There would be no male sex to belong to. That doesn't mean there wouldn't still be penises and ejaculate and prostate glands and such. It simply means that the centre of our self hood would not me required to reside inside an utterly fictitious category - a category that

only seems real to the extent that those outside it are put down.

What could two people in such total opposition to each other as Freedman and Stoltenberg have in common? Let them answer in their own words.

First Freedman:

I happen to be an authority on the subject of being humiliated on the athletic field because that was the tale of my youth. In the neighbourhood I grew up in, there were sports and then there was, in a far lower category, everything else (which was sad - but no more so than the attitude of many male feminists these days who think it's chic to totally denigrate sports). And I was always last choice...

There are a number of ways in which I know that the disappointment and humiliation I underwent affected my development (others can only be speculated at). I "compensated" in every way I could think of: by talking "tough" (saying dat for that, using deliberately incorrect grammar, etc.); by intentionally doing worse work academically than I was capable of, because I couldn't bear to hear, over and over, "You may be good in school, but you stink in sports" (better, I thought in my naivete, to stink in both); by joining the Marines as soon as I turned 17, taking up boxing right after I got out, and by a lot of other "macho" things.

Stoltenberg says:

All the time I was growing up, I knew that there was something really problematic in my relationship to manhood. Inside, deep inside, I never believed I was fully male - I never believed I was growing up enough of a man. I believed that someplace out there, in other men, there was something that was genuine authentic all-American manhood - the real stuff - and I didn't have it; not enough of it to convince me, anyway, even if I managed to be fairly convincing to those around me. I felt like an impostor, like a fake. I agonized a lot about not feeling male enough, and I had no idea then how much I was not alone.

The sort of emotional pain felt by these two men when they were young is common to many men and women probably to most, to one degree or another. The problem of failing to match up to externally imposed standards for one's sex is often discussed in this newsletter. But as the two stories illustrate starkly, the defence mechanism employed to cope with the experience can differ drastically. For Freedman the defence was "reaction formation": "Don't tell ME I'm not a real man. I'll out-macho anyone!" For Stoltenberg it was an extreme version of "sour grapes": "Manhood is valueless anyway - and trying to achieve it is consummately evil."

Both reactions are so tragically unnecessary. It never occurs to Freedman - at best, he fails to admit the possibility - that the real source of his personal pain might have been the very gender-role straitjacket he now so strongly defends. Why doesn't it occur to him? Perhaps because, having fought so desperately to "win his manhood," he cannot now admit that the sacrifices were all needless. His empathy for those boys is fully justified, but it doesn't seem to occur to him that, if they

were not made to feel insecure in their maleness in the first place (by failure to live up to a preassigned standard of masculinity), it would not bother them to be bested in a "male" pursuit by a girl. Though manipulated his whole life by the taunt "Aren't you man enough?", Freedman is willing to let them run the same cruel gauntlet. Through relentless efforts, evidently, he was himself able to achieve the level of physical prowess he saw as required to have a sense of full masculinity. But others may never be able to do it; for them, his solution to the feelings of inadequacy will not work. Which brings us back to Stoltenberg.

He is no better off than Freedman - much worse, in fact, as I see it. For he has felt compelled, not just to reject the traditional masculine standards as irrelevant to him as an individual male, but to reject and despise maleness itself. That compulsion can only leave him, deep inside, in a state of self-hatred, desperately fighting

▶ page 27



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UNDER SATURN'S SHADOW: The Wounding and Healing of Men, \$16.00, paperback. New from the acclaimed Jungian analyst who wrote The Middle Passage: From Misery to Meaning in Midlife (\$15). Saturn was the Roman god who ate his children in an attempt to stop them from usurping his power. Men throughout history have been psychologically and spiritually burdened by the Saturnian legacy, suffering from the corruption of empowerment, driven by their fear of women and other men, wounding themselves and others. Hollis addresses these issues and many more, suggesting practical ways in which men may reclaim their sense of personal integrity. Women as well as men will find this book well worth reading, not only for its revelation and elucidation of the "secrets" men carry in their hearts, but also for its rich perspective on what we all must do to free ourselves from the worst influences of patriarchy. A strong book.

OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT: Ritual. Magic, and Initiation in the Life of an African Shaman, by Malidoma Patrice Somé, \$29.95, cloth. Due out in May, this is an extraordinary autobiography of an African Dagara shaman and his initiation into two worlds, the white and the tribal. A truly amazing life story, a third of the book describes what is permitted to be told of a month-long wilderness initiation camp for young men with the tribal elders. Malidoma is now teaching at men's and multicultural conferences with Michael Meade, who praises him as "a remarkable and uniquely talented man. Rarely can one person carry both the ancient ways of tribal Africa and the ways of Wetern thought and psychology. Malidoma not only carries these, but combines them, separates them, dances with them."

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- celebrating adult manhood as the path of the warrior
- healing and sexuality

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The group allows the men to cut through the cultural messages that deny the fact of their victimization. In the company of other survivors they can connect with the full range of their emotions and with a more complete experience of maleness.

Brian Callahan, M.Div., R.C.C., is a counsellor and consultant in private practice in Vancouver. Mr. Callahan's training is in psychology, philosophy and theology. He has eight years experience working as a counsellor. Brian's current work is concentrated on the issues of adult male survivors, partners of survivors and adult men's issues around emotion, anger management and relationships.

FOR INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER PLEASE CALL: 222-9291

Single Jingle - O! Joy of Active Fatherhood

by Mikkel Brams

"I am a Girl Government!" my daughter sings in glee, perching regally on the arm rest in the middle of the back seat. Surveying her subjects from this satisfying new height, she pronounces "And we are going to see another Girl Government!" She means my friend, Lady Llama-Look.

Smiling loyally into the rearview mirror, I ponder my place and the dynamics of gender power. The kids are OK and know nothing of Supreme Court. The divorce battle goes as well as can be expected. The Queen Mother hasn't actually offed my head, nor I hers. Cash-poor, experience-rich, I remain at home in the realm of traditional female control: parenting. I have hopes and plans. I have friends. I like women. Life is good and hard.

Some people bank their sperm to invest themselves in future generations, no fuss, instant returns, all quality time. Me - well, liquidity is a problem at the bank, and still I collect interest, psychic interest, and it compounds every day I am with the kids. I am a lucky guy.

The fruit of my loins is the pick of the crop. The kindergarten teacher tells me what a sensitive little dear my GG is. Ha! Cute power don't fool me no more, I tell myself, she's tough, too. "I'm shy!" she says about school and later, at home, beats the bejeezus out of her helpful older brother. Yup, he's a caretaker, too. Man to man, I give him remedial instruction in gender-aware conflict resolution technique. She rolls with the ensuing punches and gives me a hug. Women. Go figure.

Court looks like an oversize suburban

rec-room, complete with uncomfy chairs, games tables, leatherette accents, garish lighting, arrested teens, and a bar. That Erickson is a genius. I am mystified by the ceiling: two fans, unmoving, twenty feet up, have pull chains. Obviously a symbol: the means of meaningful family justice are simple, yet placed way out of reach of the only hands who can truly clear the air - the parents'.

The blindfolded woman wielding a sword makes me nervous; somebody will get hurt. And like in any other war, it is children and other innocent civilians who suffer most from this mediaeval battlefield method of resolving family problems.

The stench of vile, heated argument makes the huge courtroom unbearably cramped. "These people have to learn to speak to each other!" Madam Justice bellows from the bench and

proceeds to spank both lawyers. Uhhuh; now I get it. Watching him writhe, I empathize with counsel for the future ex, then realize that I, too, am getting royally screwed. In the end, they all congratulate each other on a great job, then count the silver. The ex and I can take solace in knowing that the money may put kids through college. Not ours, though.

So I look for my justice elsewhere. "I love you, Daddy!" my daughter declares, jumps me, and accidentally crushes something sensitive. Love hurts. Hers may well be the queendom, the power, and the glory, one day. So take heed, single fathers: never, never, never give up.

And watch out, enemies of fathers: the Girl Government will crush you all, some day. All except her dear old dad.

Mikkel Brams is a single father and business analyst in Vancouver.

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- Create and disseminate processes that help boys become mature and responsible men
- Challenge the negative stereotyping of men in the media and social, legal and governmental institutions
- Promote positive models of mature masculinity
- Find ways of reducing male violence inflicted against both men and women then you need to support and join Vancouver M.E.N. We need your active involvement and your financial contributions.

Right now we need men to help us in 3 areas:

Divorce and child custody: If you have any experience with the horrors of how some men are treated in divorce proceedings and want to do something about it, contact Bill Hnidan at 945-0903

Negative Stereotyping: Do you read the papers or watch television? Do you get steamed when you see flagrant negative generalizations about men? If you'd like to do something about this call John Brozak at 732-0946.

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DIRECTORY OF MEN'S SERVICES

..... UPDATED EDITION

We invite new entries for the third edition of our directory which will be published in the July 1994 edition of Thurder Stick. There is no charge for inclusion. Our requirement is that the service being offered includes a special interest in men's issues.

Areas covered in the first edition were:

- men's groups
- resources for men's groups
- men's events
- resources in Canada and USA
- assaultive men
- sexual abuse
- sexual preference resources

- private practitioners
- legal
- emergency shelters
- prison/release programs
- men's magazines
- computer bulletin boards

There is a need to expand listings in all these areas, especially in the "legal" listing. If you know of attorneys who do good work in the areas of divorce and custody issues, please let us know. We will follow up and ask them if they wish to be listed.

We would also like to know of more services outside Vancouver in the rest of BC, so that our directory is more comprehensive.

If we do not hear from the people/agencies listed in the second edition by April 30th, we will contact them to verify information.

Please direct all written information to:

MEN'S DIRECTORY

206 - 4545 West 10th Avenue,

or phone Les at 222-1116

Vancouver, B.C. V6R 4N2

DEADLINE for new entries: May 31st, 1994.

Les Leader, Dwight Moore, Coordinators of Directory of Men's Services



by John Brozak

Fire With Fire, by Naomi Wolf Published by Random House of Canada

Naomi Wolf's book Fire With Fire may seem like an unusual book to be reviewed in a Men's journal. This is an important book for anyone interested in the current state of relations between men and women. I intend to focus on one aspect of her work, that of Victim versus Power feminism. Wolf defines Victim Feminism as "casting women as sexually pure and mystically nurturing, and stresses the evil done to these 'good' women as a way to petition for their rights. "Power Feminism" sees women as human beings - sexual, individual, no better or worse than their counterparts - and lays claim to equality simply because women are entitled to it. Victim feminist assumptions about universal female goodness and powerlessness, and male evil, are unhelpful in the new moment - outdated attitudes women need least right now."

Ms Wolf traces the feminist traditions back the same source that Robert Bly uses for men's alienation from the family, the Industrial Revolution. "Both men and women produced food and clothing for the household; the goods and services that women sold were a vital part of a town's economic life." "With the rise of industrialization paid work was taken out of the home and situated in an office or factory, where it was redefined as belonging only to men, who were now expected to support their now unproductive wives on a "family paycheque," and were 'elevated' to the status of 'Angel in the House.' Wolf goes on to explain the pressures that were brought upon women to accept their new roles as rulers of the household and upholders of morality while surrendering the public sphere to men.

Nineteenth century Victim Feminism organized the Women's Christian Temperance Union to protest alcoholic breadwinner's abuse of women and children that eventually led to Prohibition. While this movement led to many lasting changes it relied on the rhetoric of women's innocence and men's sexual brutality. Coexistent with this was a second strand of feminism that

celebrated female sexuality and self determination. These women believed that women must develop "self-reliance and self-impulse" and take responsibility for raising their own status. They also preached that men were not the enemy but partners in the fight for social equality (a sentiment which is rare even in today's more 'enlightened' times.)

Wolf then proceeds onto, what for me is one of the most affirming chapters that I have read in a long time. She writes a beautiful sensual paean to heterosexuality from which I quote with much pleasure. "Let us give the love of men, too, its legitimate feminist weight. I want men, male care, male sexual attention. This desire doesn't necessarily make a woman a slave or an addict; Male sexual attention is the sun in which I bloom. The male body is ground and shelter to me, my lifelong destination. There must be room in feminism for a radical heterosexuality, an Eros between men and women that does not diminish female power, but affirms it."

Naomi Wolf then moves on to dispute the sympathetic rendering given several prominent women victims in the media, among those she discounts are Jean Harris and Hedda Nusbaum. I recently encountered an interesting application of 'woman as victim' theme. A lawyer was commenting on Tonya Harding's pleading guilty to several charges regarding the Nancy Kerrigan attack. He was surprised that she hadn't pleaded not guilty and claimed that she was the victim of an abusive husband.

Wolf next states that women must come to accept their 'bad girl' aspects as well as the nurturing roles that are so glowingly presented these days. She then quotes some statistics regarding child abuse that are very illuminating. "Females account for 49.5 percent of all physical abuse of children, including 56.8 percent of major physical abuse, 48.5 percent of minor physical abuse, 17.6 percent of sexual abuse or exploitation and 69.7 percent of abuse by neglect. It seems that mothers are just as capable of harming their children as fathers."

Integrating the bad girl is the theme of the next portion of this work. She quotes an unacknowledged author in the following way, "I am good and evil, nurturer and aggressor, creator and destroyer. I am no victim, no saint, but a potent human being: loving to friends, dangerous to those who endanger me." She then offers very valid reasons on the necessity for women to reclaim their 'shadows,' as the Jungians would say ending with the following sentence. "Feminism should not mean being a saint. It should mean owning one's own demonic, angelic soul."

Part four of this book deals with the author's, and by extension, women in general, fear of power and money. She disagrees with Deborah Tannen and her fellow 'difference psychologists,' and her points of reference warrant quoting at length. "I am persuaded that their view overlooks a submerged, forbidden half of the feminine psyche. It also seems that their conclusions ... must be tempered by the fact that girls and women are comfortable reporting the wish for intimacy, but are not comfortable reporting, say, fantasies of rage, competition, victory, dominion no matter how real those fantasies are. I believe that the apparently effortless harmony and "niceness" are purchased at the price of great control, cruelty, and vigilance. In my opinion,

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little girls certainly want intimacy and connection. But these theories don't account for the other deep drive: Little girls also want to rule the world."

As Robert Moore writes elsewhere "Depth psychology has demonstrated that what is repressed will return, and it will rarely return in a pleasant form. A dark and chthonic Power, split off and repressed by society, will return to our world with a vengeance." What I find so refreshing and liberating about her approach to women's repressed aspects is that by discovering and acknowledging their dark and buried sides is that women might then cease projecting them onto men.

Naomi Wolf's solution to women's lack of power is to form what she calls Power Groups or for those who find that term too threatening, Resource Groups. The purpose of these groups is too switch the focus from "What hurts?" to "What can be done?". She defines it as a group of twenty or thirty women who meet monthly,

▶ page 28



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How Men Touch Men

page 7

That was very painful and confusing.

By the time puberty hit, I had got the message that I had a choice between two mutually exclusive paths. I could be a "real" man a la John Wayne and shut down my tender, loving, playful feelings - not only toward my male friends, but even toward my female friends whom I must now begin "making." Or I could be a "queer," and cut off my real feelings from almost everyone - except others who made the same limiting choice (to be gay). It seemed like a no-win predicament. I secretly began exploring the gay side, and finding what little emotional satisfaction I could in furtive sexual contact (even though sex was really only a small part of what I really wanted, which was affection).

As an adult, I discovered massage. To my delight I realized that the rest of my body can experience at least



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as much pleasure from touch as my genitals can. More importantly, I realized that nurturing and affectionate touch does not necessarily lead to sex, but is deeply satisfying in itself. I understood that I had been looking to sex to satisfy a much more primal need for loving touch.

Decades have passed. I've been involved in gay liberation, the men's movement, and supportive of the women's movement. I've learned much about myself, other men, and our social norms. And I am convinced that the dichotomy between "gay" and "straight" does violence to all men, and hence to all people. The terms force us into restrictive pigeon-holes. To accept either label is to be limited in our intimate choices.

There are three beliefs commonly held by men in our culture which tend to isolate us from one another physically:

- touch equals sex;
- sex/touch is either hetero or homo we can only choose one; and
- hetero is good, homo is bad.

I disagree with all of those premises. My experience has shown me that:

- There are lots of ways to share touch which do not necessarily lead to sex (e.g., hugs, massage, holding, cuddling). For brevity, I distinguish between sex (physical stimulation intended to bring about arousal and, perhaps, orgasm) and affection (words and/or touch intended to express caring, warmth, and to enhance well-being). The two can be experienced separately or together. We have a choice.
- We can choose to share sex and/or affection in any mode hetero/homo/bi. Thus a person can prefer to be sexual with only one gender and still be affectionate with both, or vice versa.

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The full spectrum of sexual/affectional possibilities is as follows:

SEX AFFECTION
hetero hetero
bi bi hetero
bi bi homo
homo bi
homo homo

The current cultural norms are really accepting of the heyro/hetro possibility only. I suspect many men are ready explore the possibilities that lie beyond.

One potential problem is that affectionate touch can trigger emotional and/or erotic feelings, which can cause anxiety. Because we have been taught that it is improper/immoral to be sexual with other men, and assume that erotic feelings will lead to sex, we tend to be afraid of those feelings in ourselves or one another. For many people, the presence of an erect penis is experienced as an indication of sexual desire (in oneself or the other person), which may at "inappropriate" times be embarrassing or even threatening for either person. In reality, the erection may simply mean that the man is feeling pleasantly energized, in a heightened state of well-being.

For me the operative word in intimate sharing is choice. We can choose when, how, and with whom we wish to act on any feelings we feel. In order for both people to truly have a choice about the kind of contact that is mutually agreeable, we need to develop sensitive communication skills: to ask clearly for what we want, to be respectful of the other person's needs, to be able to set clear boundaries by negotiating with one another about what we each are open to at any given moment.

To the extent that men are forced by societal norms to

Terrance M. Wapshall, Ph.D.

Registered Clinical Psychologist

Diplomate Analyst - C.G. Jung Inst. - Zurich

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conceal our affection for each other, we cut off a vital part of our loving nature. I believe that repressing our loving energy for one another forces the energy to emerge as heightened violence.

I want the next step in the men's movement to be a conscious dialogue among ourselves about how we feel about our ways of touching and showing affection. Are we truly happy with the range of options presently "acceptable?" What new conscious choices might we make to connect with each other more whole-heartedly? I would like all men to have permission to hug, kiss, hold hands, caress, massage, dance, sleep together, and be as tender, playful, sensuous, and/or sexual as each man would like.

I invite the beginnings of this dialogue in our councils and publications. The very life of the planet may depend in part on men's ability to fully embrace our tender, caring selves. To quote the poet James Broughton, "Love between men will anachronize war!"

Sequoia Thom Lundy, M.A., is in private practice in Vancouver, offering stress management counselling and bodywork, as well as classes and workshops in yoga, meditation, and massage. He can be reached at (604) 731-4441.

Articles Art Poetry

We are seeking submissions; articles, art, poetry, from men in the community on issues and concerns of men.

In particular we wish to publish articles by men and women that focus on the gender/relationship issues.

> Phone or write Vancouver M.E.N. 3392 West 34th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V6N 2K6 290-9988

Guy Corneau Interview

▶ page 9

relations. For example, what were the good sides or the bad sides, what were you blaming the other for? What you're accusing the other of doing to you is something that you're doing to yourself. It is the part of yourself that's crying for love and intimacy and you're brutalizing it.

So, you ask other people to care for that part of you when in fact you have to wake up and care for it yourself. Accept that there is pain there and maybe go to the pain to nourish and be nourished. Basically the workshop is going from the exterior of intimacy in our lives, coming to the core, to the intimacy with that part of ourselves that is screaming so that we can take care of it. I'm going through a series of questions and moves that are really psychological moves from what we

project outside ourselves to what are we doing to ourselves.

Then we examine what can we do about that concretely in our everyday lives. I bring people to a sense of relationship, that when they're connected to that part they may be more vulnerable but they are also more open to new relations in their lives, because they're connected with their real needs. It's a kind of humanizing workshop.

Q Sunday, there is a smaller, low key workshop for fathers, sons and daughters. What will that look like?

A It will be centred on the experience of the father but it would be interesting to have an open discussion. I think it would be interesting to encourage people to come with a family person, because it brings a lot of emotion into the room. When you set the tone right with a lot of respect and listening to others, you really

learn a lot very quickly.

When people are not accused of anything they talk about where they're coming from. When I conducted a similar workshop in Montreal, a man who had been away from home for 23 years because he was a drunk was in the audience with his 26 year old son. It was very moving.

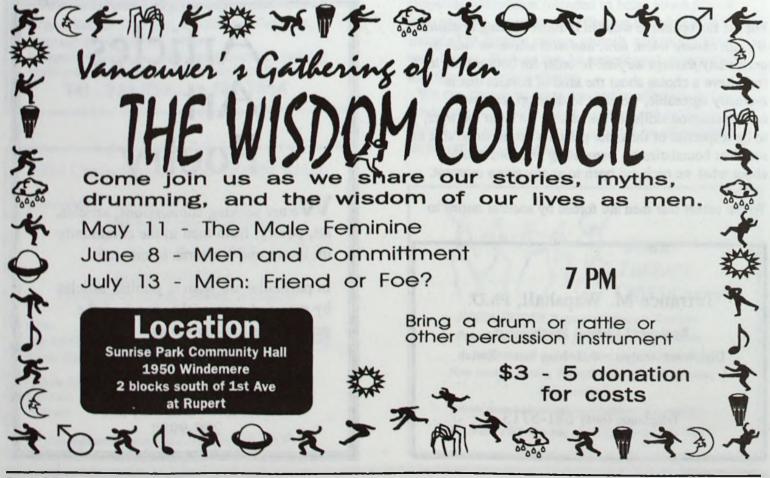
Q Did the son bring the father to the workshop?

A Yes. He said he kept a good image of his father through all those years and was glad he was back home now.

Q So he was actually able to return to the family home?

A Yes. There were many moving testimonies among the people in the room. They ranged in age from 15 to 80. This workshop is limited to sons and daughters aged 16 and up.

Q Thank you. •





Circumcision

Dear Editor,

In the current issue of Thurder Stick, I was interested by the article about circumcision and, as part of the continuing the dialogue, another area I would like to see Thurder Stick pursue, is reclaiming our foreskins. I have heard that there are possibilities that don't involve surgery or similar complications that are effective. I haven't been able to locate any specific information about them, but, perhaps, Thurder Stick, with its wide contacts, may have better luck.

With the changing attitudes about circumcision, it seems to me that other men may be interested in

foreskin retrieval as well. I look forward to seeing this dialogue continue.

John McCubbin Calgary

Dear Editor,

I applaud Neil Chethik's balanced discussion on the question of circumcising male infants. And I was delighted to read the note at the end indicating that he and his wife had decided against.

I had my foreskin amputated without my consent shortly after birth, and have felt mutilated and resentful ever since. Even though I didn't look different from my father and most other boys, I realized early on that I was missing something. I vividly remember seeing another little boy's intact penis in kindergarten, and envying him. In later sexual explorations with other guys I discovered that the foreskin does indeed protect the sensitivity of the penis, and can significantly increase erotic pleasure for both partners.

So I strongly believe that an operation which is painful, involuntary, medically unnecessary, and permanently disfiguring, only serves the doctors who collect fees for performing them.

Let men decide for themselves when they are old enough!

Sequoia Lundy

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He Spent His Last 6 Months in a M.E.N.s Group

by John O'Sullivan

On a warm July evening in 1993 Sidney K. Cole walked into his first M.E.N.'s meeting. He had responded to a community ad" Support Group For Men Meets Tuesday". It was one day before his seventy ninth birthday.

"What was the purpose of our group"? He asked. "To support and challenge each other to lead fully conscious lives," I replied. "Hmmm," said Sid, "interesting, but why do men join?" I saw Sid was trying to fit his picture into this framework. I gave one more example. "A man showed up once at a group meeting and said he was there because he didn't know six men well enough to carry his coffin."

I'm not sure why, but Sid joined our small band of men that night and he never missed a meeting until January 11th, 1994, the night he died in Richmond General Hospital following a massive stroke the day before. We conducted our own wake that night and recalled the impact this man had on our lives and we evidently had on his final six months of life.

At the grave side we saw that Sid had more than enough family and friends to support him. What was interesting to us, we who had shared in such a brief but obviously important portion of his long life, was not just the invitation to our men's group to attend, but also the honour of delivering the eulogy.

Like most M.E.N.'s meetings ours begins with a "check in". As Sid listened to the individual men speak, he sat in awe as we poured out our litany of challenges week in and out. From separation to divorce, reconciliation to remarriage - some had lost families, homes and businesses, others were in court trying to protect children from abuse.

When Sid began to check in he apologised and said: "I feel so fortunate. I met and married my beautiful Clara 54 years ago, I have four great children, who have produced five wonderful grandkids. I'm a retired business consultant with no financial constraints. Other than some medical problems I have no anxiety at all. I feel like such a fraud being with you fellows and hearing your woes".

As the first weeks rolled by, Sid, an outstanding raconteur, would regale our group with stories of his life, surviving the depression in his home town of Winnipeg, riding the rods to Detroit, and becoming the number one life insurance salesman on Canada's west coast. In our check in's we spoke of the last seven days Sid covered the last 70 years. "Am I doing this right", Sid would inquire? Just fine Sid just fine.

But in a short while he got the gist of the check in. He began giving us a weekly update on his encounters with medical specialist, often a dozen and more in a week. From opthamologists to urologists he would describe how he was prodded, poked and sampled, all accompanied by an expert sadly shaking his mystified head. Back and forth Sid would go with no relief or end in sight, but at least he believed it made for a 'good check in'.

Either the medical profession gave up, or Sidney was somehow magically healed, we never did discover which. But he moved in due course from medical reports to movie reviews. He became our resident Siskell and Ebert. We would sit mesmerised as Sid would (using his marvellous skills as a writer of short stories), give us glowing insights into likely Oscar winners and, where not to waste our money on his previous weeks movie visits.

When we lost Sidney K. Cole this past January we lost a connection with a bygone era. He was a 'true character' with a zest for life not matched by many half his age. We lost a friend and a teacher. He had a unique ability to reach out to each of the men in the group and touch him at a special level of friendship. As a teacher he showed by example how to keep a positive outlook even during the darkest days, when his beloved Clara underwent major heart surgery last Christmas. "Once I get Clara back and healthy", he would say during check in time, "I'm going to be perfect again". And he was!

We lost our elder, our sage, or in the archetype language of Robert Moore we lost our king on that night last January. We taught Sid about the 'talking stick', but he taught us the art of listening with the heart. He gave us the gift of healing by his mere presence. We gave Sidney the gift for an elder to share his life story. Our group was a place to come home to, a place to integrate in the final days of his long journey.

As I look for a symbol to reflect on this man's life and the loss we felt in our group, I had the sense of a bright light being extinguished. But I can see Sid sitting across from me with a shake of his head. He would not want to be described in this way. His life touched and brightened the lives of many people, family, friends and in his last days, our men's group. Instead of a light going out, he stands more like a beacon on the mountain top urging us to keep moving even in the darkest of days.

Our lives have been enriched and burn a little brighter for having met, known and loved Sidney K. Cole.

We miss you Sid R.I.P. Ho!

YOU WANT TO BE IN A MEN'S GROUP?

Who do you call? These men will help put you in touch with a new or already formed men's group in their area.

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Vancouver Island:

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(East of Surrey) Evan Brett 534-0205

(Men's Ritual Work) Scott Carruthers 856-8524

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Vancouver M.E.N. is looking for men to step forward to act as Regional Co-ordinators for men's groups in other parts of B.C. We'll help you to set up and cover the minor costs associated with providing this important community service.

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Name: Address: City: Province:(State) Postal Code: \$10 for 1 year (4 issues) \$18 for 2 years (8 issues) Prices include G.S.T. Please make cheques payable to: Thunder Stick

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A STORY OF MY UNCLE

I was four: and my uncle, for want of bread. fished. "I fed them everything," he said, triumphant -his bulging sack stinking brown over his shoulder. "I fed them everything, and here is the sack," he said, to my mother -her elbow outsticking like a giant knuckle from a green sweater.

He stood tall before me, my black-headed uncle, and I imagined him wandering the shore like some Francis. casting crumbs to the fish who gathered there. "We will eat tonight! Prepare the fish!"

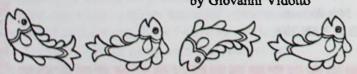
It beckoned me, that sack, twitching like the body of a fallen man; but I was not brave enough, in those days, to touch things in corners where beetles lay.

While my aproned mother served the white and steaming fish, I studied: my uncle's delight, his mouth,

> the deliberate mixture of earth and sea

and discovered how little he understood the activities of saints: but in my wisdom. I too stooped to eat.

by Giovanni Vidotto





Hollow Men - Hollow Women

Dear Editor,

I would like to take this opportunity to applaud Jack Nittel for his article in the last issue of Thunder Stick entitled "Something Happened" that he wrote about his childhood sexual abuse for "all the hollow men". I am one of the "hollow women" and that story could just as easily have been written by a women. Jack Nittel's story is my story. I have read it many times and cry every time I read it. He wrote from his soul and his soul touched my soul. I want Jack Nittel to know that by being courageous and sharing his story, it had helped me in a small way to become courageous myself.

There are many ways that men and women are different, just because we are men and women. But I like to think we are learning that in a lot of ways we are the same. It doesn't matter if you are male or female - the destruction left behind by childhood sexual abuse affects every aspect of one's life. It has destroyed everything of value in my life. It has touched my family, my relationships, my friends, my work, my sense of self. Only those men and women who have been sexually abused will understand what it is like to go through life frozen in fear and yet putting on a front just to get through the day. I have spent my entire life never even knowing what a boundary was and allowing myself to be used and abused physically, verbally, mentally and emotionally.

I am in therapy now and I have begun to heal. For all the men who put down women because we don't respond the way men want us to, and who get angry because they feel so frustrated at us, please learn to have some compassion and understanding. Before being men and women, we are all human beings. I would like to see men and women come together more as human beings, and not two different species in different corners.

Thank you again Jack Nittel. I want you to know that your courage has helped another soul. It has also helped me to see that childhood sexual abuse affects men just as it does women.

Cathy Camm •

The Freedman - Stoltenberg Syndrome

▶ page 13

each trait in himself that happens to be male-identified even if for him a given trait is perfectly natural and healthy. At the very least, his reaction leaves him despising vast numbers of human beings for whom various "masculine" attributes are not manifestations of an acquired role but perfectly natural. (Even if it should turn out - something we do not yet know - that very few of the average psychological differences between the sexes are biologically rather than environmentally produced, the fact would remain that large psychological differences among individuals are produced by nature - and some of those natural traits Stoltenberg despises because he sees them as masculine.) To defend his own sense of self-worth over being made to feel inferior for being different from others, Stoltenberg attributes inferiority to those who are different from him. To buttress this response by explaining how other men could be so perverse as to differ from him, he pretends he can read their minds, sometimes attributing motives to them that are vicious in the extreme. (If you want to be exposed to pure hatred, just read some of the claims made by him and his mentor Andrea Dworkin about the inner motivations of what are demonstrably natural sexual feelings for most males.)

For both Freedman and Stoltenberg the central logical error is one of association: confusing the masculine role with aspects of biological maleness. It is their failure to realise that, societal attitudes notwithstanding, one doesn't have to live up to some external standard in order to be a real male. Recognizing the inherent dignity of one's own individual nature is the essence of "liberation". Freedman is a slave to the traditional male role; but so, too, in a different way, is Stoltenberg. It has him locked into a titanic battle with a non-existent enemy - a battle that could end up causing more human misery than the real enemy, artificial sex roles, ever did.

The really bad news is that there are a lot of Freedman's and Stoltenberg out there. To varying degrees, many men have responded to traditional expectations for males in these two ways. This phenomenon has been accelerated in the past 25 years by the women's movement shaking up society's traditional perceptions of what it is to be a women - and what it is to be a man. The real solution to the pain of falling short of the standards for one's sex lies neither in "new tapes for old" - playing a new set of tapes in our heads demanding that we live up to a new external (but unisex) standard - nor in playing the old tapes louder to drown out conflicting sounds. It lies in learning to respect the uniqueness of all persons - including that of oneself. •

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Bettina Sluzki Lewis is a Vancouver painter, art teacher and art workshop leader. For over 15 years she has taught drawing and painting at U.B.C. Cont'd Ed as well as at other centres of higher learning here and abroad. Her unique approach springs from a lifelong love and study of art, psychology and the spirit of Zen.

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Naomi Wolf Book Review

▶ page 18

and would share a major interest. The gathering is structured around a party, the women are well fed, wine is served and music is played. At a certain point each woman announces what she is doing, what contacts she has to offer, and states the resources, contacts and information she needs.

Ms Wolf closes the book with a list of 'Psychological Strategies'; here are several for our consideration:

- Avoid generalizations about men that imply that their maleness is the unchangeable source of the problem;
- · Avoid generalizations about men that are totalizing;
- Never choose to widen the rift between the sexes when the option exists to narrow it, without censoring the truth;
- The fight against sexism must not lead to hating men;
- Claim our dark side and take responsibility for it;
- Abandon the notion that the fight for equality has to be gloomy; take every opportunity to make it playful, witty, sexy, and fun.

In conclusion I welcome this book and it's thoughtful contributions to the field of gender reconciliation.

From Gender War to Gender Peace

▶ page 11

mirroring from their same sex group.

In the faces of the older men, the young man sees his possibility for his own mature masculinity. An initiated man does not seek manhood through perpetrating violence on others, but rather through serving his community. In the women's lodge, in the presence of

CONRAD BOWDEN Ph.D.

REGISTERED PSYCHOLOGIST

203 - 2525 Pine (Pine and Broadway) Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3E8

(604) 732-3388 Fax 732-3538 women of all ages, sizes and shapes, the young girl discovered the mysterious, multi-faceted nature of femininity. An initiated woman learns that her true beauty and real power is something much deeper and more lasting than her sex appeal. In these rites of passage, the elders of the same sex group also transmit information to the young men and women about their emerging roles as adult men and women, co-existing in community.

Even in our own culture, women and men have traditionally had a deeply ingrained tendency to meet apart from one another. For generations, women have gathered over coffee or quilts; men have bonded in bars and raised barns. But in our modern society, we lack viable forms of initiation which deepen our sense of self, within the context of our gender. Most young people are not taught how to respect and honour the cultural differences of the other gender. They arrive at adulthood both mystified and distrustful about the other sex's power to affect them. In fact, most of our gender conflicts are essentially conflicts between different cultures. Looking at the gender war from this perspective may help us develop better solutions to our dilemmas.

In recent decades, cultural anthropologists have discovered that people with differing cultural origins are more productive members of society when their cultural identity remains intact, within the framework of the larger culture. As a consequence, the old American "melting pot" theory of cultural assimilation has evolved into a modern theory of diversity, more of a "tossed salad". In this model, each sub-culture retains its essential identity, while co-existing within the same social container.

Applying this idea to men and women in community, we can see that the trend of the last several decades has largely been moving towards the mixing, blending and assimilating of male and female culture specific behaviours; a sex-role melting pot. In our quest for equality through sameness, however, we are losing both the beauty of our diversity and our tolerance for differences. Androgyny, for many of us, does not seem to offer a satisfying answer.

In the past, perceived differences have been used to promote discrimination, devaluation and subjugation. As a result, many people ranging from New Age transcendentalists to humanistic social theorists, are justifiably suspicious of dialogues which seek to restore awareness of difference. But pretending that differences do not exist is not the way to end discrimination toward either sex.

Our present challenge is to acknowledge the value of our differing experiences as men and women, and find ways to reap this harvest in the spirit of true equality. We believe there are usually two, equally valid, differing point of view toward all our gender conflicts. In contemporary writings, the media, and in women;'s and men's groups, however, we only hear about most issues from a woman's point of view or from a man's. How then do we get to gender peace?

True equality cannot be legislated or created by merely changing the character of our social institutions. The task is also connect with re-discovering a "deep" gender identity that is not solely based upon our social, political, or economic roles. Through meeting in same sex groups, many men form intimate friendships. In addition to supporting their health and well being, these connections can take some of the pressure off their relationships with women. Men with bonded friendships no longer expect women to satisfy *all* their emotional needs

When women meet in groups they also support one another's need for connection and empowerment in the world as well. Women then no longer expect men to create their sense of self worth. So these same sex groups can be enormously valuable, not only to the participants, but to their relationships with members of the other sex as well. If we *remain* separated, however, then we risk succumbing to our narcissism, losing perspective, and fomenting the habitual domination or scapegoating of the other sex.

There are few, if any arenas today, in which women and men can safely come together, on a common ground, to discuss our rapidly changing social contracts. Instead of more sniping from the sidelines, what is needed is for groups of women and men to begin directly communicating with one another. When we take this *next step* and make a commitment to meeting with each other, then and only then can we begin to mutually support a true social, political, and spiritual equality. Through regularly meeting with groups of the other sex, we also gain greater appreciation for the unique gifts each sex holds.

Peace talks give us an opportunity to really hear one another and hopefully discover that many of our disagreements have equally valid, if different points of view. What many women regard as intimacy, feels suffocating and invasive to men. What many men regard as strength feels isolating and distant to women. Through blame and condemnation, women and men shame one another. Through compassionate communication, however, we can mutually empower one another.

Since we can only confront issues which are brought to our awareness, the "other" can provoke growth that is difficult, if not impossible, for an individual to achieve alone. Since wherever one sex suffers, the other also inevitably suffers mutual empowerment is in the best interests of each sex.

Becoming more affirming or supportive of our same sex does not have to lead us into opposition with the other sex. It can actually create a solid ground upon which more harmonious relationships between women and men can be built. Through gender diplomacy, both sexes can come together from a position of strength in order to create more compassionate communities that support each other, instead of blaming one sex for not meeting the other's expectations.

If we are to achieve gender justice, discussion of women's wage equity must also include men's job safety. Discussions about reproductive rights, custody rights or parental leave must include the rights of both mothers and father, and the needs of their children. Affirmative action to balance the male dominated political and economic leadership must also bring balance to the female dominated primary educational and social welfare systems.

We call for both sexes to come to the negotiating table from a new position of increased strength and self-esteem. We do not need to become more like one another, merely more deeply ourselves. These skills which we aspire to, and the basic attitudes that they embody, are the necessary foundation for a society capable of responding to the pressing needs of our time with committed social, political and environmental action.

Aaron Kipnis Ph.D. is the author of Knights Without Armor. Elizabeth Herron M.A. is a veteran leader of women's empowerment trainings. They are co-authors of Gender War, Gender Peace: The Quest For Love and Justice Between Women and Men.

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Vancouver M.E.N. events are for men only unless otherwise stated.

April

Beyond the 12 Steps John Salano, April 15 ad on page 7

Transformational Movement John Salano, April 16 ad on page 7

Singles Unite John Salano, April 17 ad on page 7

A Gathering of Men John Salano, April 24 ad on page 7

Mothers, Sons & Lovers Michael Gurian, April 29 ad on page 11



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Transformational Movement John Salano, April 30 ad on page 7

May

Man Alive John Solano, May 1 ad on page 7

A Gathering of Men John Salano, May 3 ad on page 7

Discovering Courage, Brian Callahan, May 14 - 16

A Gathering of Men John Salano, May 29 ad on page 7

lune

1994 Conference on Men's Health Issues University of Alberta, June 9 - 11 ad on page 20

The Meaning of Crisis: Healing the Heart Guy Corneau, June 17 ad on page 32

MEN'S GROUP WOULD LIKE TO CHALLENGE ANOTHER MEN'S GROUP OR GROUPS TO WAR GAMES.

CONTACT LOYD 738-6947

Facing Intimacy with Oneself Workshop Guy Corneau, June 18 ad on page 32

Special Father's Day Afternoon Workshop Guy Corneau, June 19 ad on page 32

Upcoming Events

Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Workshop Brian Callahan, Sept.17 - 19 ad on page 14

Ongoing Events

Men's Wisdom Council The second Wednesday of every month. 7:00-10:00 p.m. see Happenings, ad on page 22

Survivors of Incest Anonynous Gay men survivors of childhood sexual abuse support group - meets every Thursday at 8:00 pm see announcement page 31

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Happenings is a bulletin board for non-profit events of interest to men. Send bulletin items to Vancouver M.E.N. 290-9988.

MAY Wisdom Council -Vancouver's Gathering of Men

Come join us as we share our stories, myths, drumming, and the wisdom of our lives as men. Meets the second Wednesday of every month. May 11, June 8, July 13, Aug 10. Sunrise Park Community Hall, 1950 Windemere -2 blocks south of 1st Ave at Rupert \$3-5 at the door 7-10 pm.

Joining Men's Groups

Are there existing men's groups who would welcome new members? Perhaps your group needs some new energy or some men may have left? Discuss this possibility with your group and if it is of interest leave a message at Vancouver M.E.N.

Handbook for Starting a Men's Group.

Contact Vancouver M.E.N.

SURVIVORS OF INCEST **ANONYMOUS**

Gay men survivors of childhood sexual abuse support group meets every Thursday at 8 pm.

This is a self-help support group (free and voluntary) modeled after the twelve step program for survivors who want to heal the abuse in their lives.

For information call Robert 876-5071.

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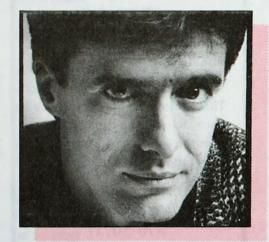
Friday, June 17th, Evening Public Lecture:

The Meaning of Crisis: Healing the Heart

This lecture focuses on the betrayal of the heart and body, and the split between masculine and feminine, between instinct and spirituality that afflict our civilization. Guy illustrates such betrayal by using the story of Perceval, Knight of the Round Table who was driven to find the Grail. Guy will share his own experience of a severe illness that brought him close to death and that lead to a special opening of his heart.

Time: 8:00 pm, Place: John Olivier High School (41st & Fraser) Cost: \$15 at the door

Guy Corneau is a Jungian psychoanalyst. His work focuses on healing the hearts and minds of men and women. Guy is the author of Absent Father's/Lost Sons and is currently writing The War of Love (working title). It details the dynamics of the mother and son relationship and how these dynamics influence and effect future adult relationships.



June 17th, 18th & 19th

Guy Corneau

Saturday, June 18th,

One Day Workshop for Men & Women:

Facing Intimacy with Oneself

This workshop invites you to look back in the story of intimacy in your life. In an exercise called A Mandala of Relationships, you will be asked to draw your love lifeline (from your parents to your partners to yourself) in order to discover how each important relationship reveals and reflects who you are deep inside.

Time: 9:30 am - 7:30 pm

Place: 3851 Willow Street, (near 23rd & Oak)

Cost: \$80

Registration: Limited to 20 men and 20 women - a \$25 deposit will ensure your space. Participants should plan to attend the Friday Lecture.

Sunday, June 19th, Special Father's Day

Afternoon Workshop

This is a special invitation to fathers to share with their daughters and/ or sons an afternoon of their experience of fatherhood in an enviornment of respect and honour. Men are also welcome to bring their fathers.

Time: 12:00 noon - 5:00 pm Place: 3851 Willow Street.

(near 23rd & Oak)

Cost: \$30 per family

Registration: Recommended for children 16 years and older.

For more information contact David Hanley 732-3713 or John Brozak 732-0946.